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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

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(Information as of noon EST, 2 April 1970)

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DOMINICAN OPPOSITION THREATENS ELECTORAL ABSTENTION  
In the first of what is likely to be a series of  
electoral crises, the major opposition parties are  
threatening to abstain from the elections in May.

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## FAR EAST

The French Government's call for an international conference on Indochina will have little immediate effect on the situation in the area. The Communists, unless they inspired the French initiative, will probably take some time in working out their response while they assess reactions from other countries. Like other participants in the proposed conference, the North Vietnamese will find it hard to turn the French down cold. Hanoi could well use the prospect of such a conference to keep alive the possibility of a negotiated settlement.

The Cambodian Government, having weathered the first challenges from supporters of the ousted Sihanouk and their Communist allies, has signaled a willingness to improve relations with the Vietnamese Communists. Phnom Penh has ordered joint military activity with the South Vietnamese terminated and, in a communiqué issued on 1 April, protested recent South Vietnamese cross-border forays. These initiatives probably reflect a more sober assessment by the new government of the difficult position in which it finds itself as a result of its initial anti-Vietnamese attitudes, as well as its concern over the possibility of increased Communist military and subversive pressure.

The widespread Communist attacks launched in South Vietnam as April began may have been intended by Hanoi to back up its tough stance on Cambodia and to discourage Saigon's enthusiasm for cross-border actions. Generally light shellings were directed against more than 150 targets, including three provincial capitals, and several strong ground assaults also occurred. Hanoi may also have sought to create apprehension in the US about developments in Southeast Asia. The attacks demonstrate anew the continued viability and effectiveness of the Communist apparatus in South Vietnam.

North Vietnamese troops in northern Laos have been stymied by General Vang Pao's guerrilla forces and have been pushed out of important positions near the government base at Long Tieng. The Communists are reinforcing their troops and may try to shell the base's airstrip, which is vital to supplying Vang Pao's forces. The North Vietnamese are also moving against other government outposts near the Plaine des Jarres, reflecting their sensitivity to guerrilla operations against Communist supply lines in the area.

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## VIETNAM

The tempo of military action in South Vietnam picked up considerably during the past week. On the night of 31 March - 1 April, Communist forces carried out widespread but generally light shelling attacks and several strong ground assaults against more than 150 US and South Vietnamese positions. Allied bases at Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, Bien Hoa, and three US division headquarters north of Saigon were among the most significant targets struck. Preliminary field reports indicate that some 50 US and 80 South Vietnamese soldiers were killed and nearly 200 wounded. Enemy casualties numbered in the hundreds.

This latest surge was one of the liveliest of the enemy's winter-spring campaign and closely resembled other country-wide flare-ups launched periodically by the Communists in 1969. The attacks probably constitute the much-delayed enemy offensive phase originally scheduled for February but frustrated until now by both internal problems and allied spoiling operations.

South Vietnamese sweep operations from the Mekong Delta against Communist forces in sanctuary across the Cambodian border also touched off some stiff fighting this week. In coordination with local Cambodian officials,

South Vietnamese ranger, armored, and air units conducted several cross-border raids against the enemy. More than 100 Communists were killed before the South Vietnamese troops were reined in by Saigon.

The Communists, meanwhile, have become increasingly sensitive to the threat to their Cambodian base areas from such operations. Elements of two North Vietnamese regiments and several newly infiltrated sapper battalions responded to the recent cross-border forays by launching a series of coordinated mortar, rocket, and infantry attacks against South Vietnamese bases in the western delta on 29 and 30 March. The attacks appear to have achieved the desired effect of forcing the South Vietnamese to pull their regular forces away from the Cambodian border to help defend vulnerable bases and urban areas.

Communist forces along the Cambodian border in northern III Corps, similarly worried about a threat to their sanctuaries, also mounted several pre-emptive attacks against the allies.

There is evidence, however, that South Vietnamese and Cambodian authorities have taken measures to curtail future cross-border operations because of the

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obvious risks of a seriously widened war that they entail.

Political Disaffection in Saigon

President Thieu is calling for firm action to end the recent spate of antigovernment agitation.

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He emphasized that these activities must be ended quickly, but that government crackdowns must be explained adequately to the people, presumably to head off further criticism of the regime.

Thieu said he would not tolerate strikes on school grounds by students protesting the arrest of student leaders on charges of acting as Communist agents. He threatened to close some schools if nec-

essary. He called for swift prosecution of the accused students, but asked the release of those against whom there is no evidence. He also demanded settlement of the legitimate grievances of disabled veterans.

Despite Thieu's apparent desire to justify the government stand against dissenters, his political opponents are likely to continue to be resentful. Developments such as the student unrest are already bringing forth new criticisms of the government.

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## CHINA COMBATS SCHISTOSOMIASIS

Communist China has initiated an intensive and widely coordinated campaign against schistosomiasis. A chronic infestation of that debilitating disease affects a huge area of East and southeast China inhabited by perhaps 400 million people. The regime has underscored its intent to mount the most serious eradication campaign yet by re-establishing a central committee group for this purpose and by having politburo member Ching Ch'un-ch'iao host a conference in Shanghai recently for planning and coordinating the prevention and eradication of schistosomiasis. Representatives from 11 provinces and from the Shanghai municipality covering the area of China affected by the disease attended the conference.

The major aim of the campaign is to destroy the snails that are hosts for the parasitic worm that actually causes the disease in man. Masses of peasants, under the guidance of the "barefoot doctors," are gathering snails and burying them, as well as clearing streams and irrigation ditches of the vegetation upon which the snails feed. Even with the simple methods being used, this program will probably reduce the incidence both of reinfestation and of new cases, but the likelihood of total eradication is small. The incidence of schistosomiasis will probably rise again after the first enthusiasm for the control program wanes. Previous efforts had done much to reduce the incidence of the disease in China's rice-paddy areas, but uncoordinated local efforts could not achieve lasting success because

of reinfestation from neighboring regions. Moreover, during the Cultural Revolution, control programs lapsed and the disease probably returned to near its reported 1958 level of about 100 million cases, a toll that was approximated again in 1965.

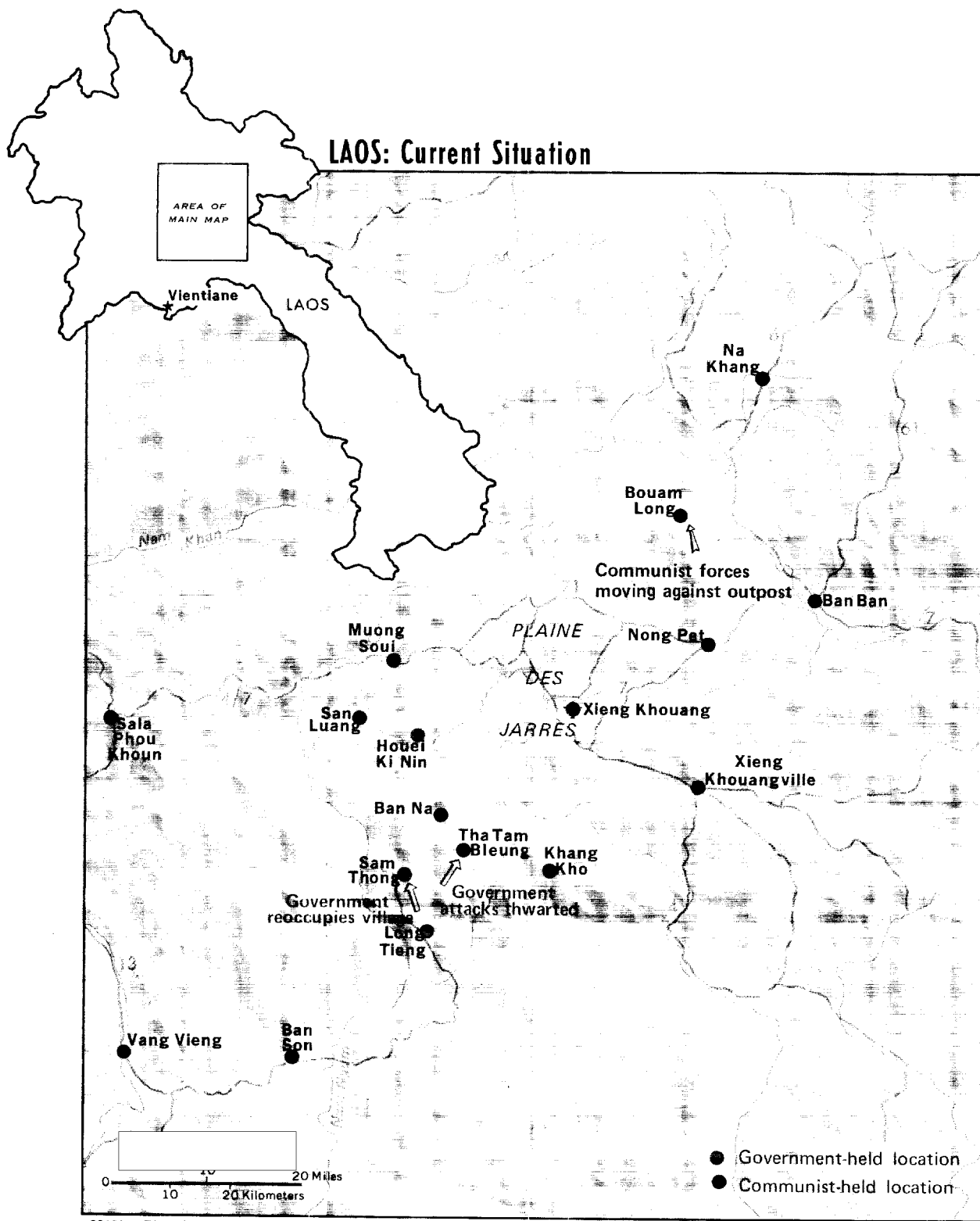
In addition to the problem of eradicating the cause of the disease, China faces a considerable medical task in caring for those who already have schistosomiasis. Effective treatment of the 100 million infested Chinese could constitute a severe medical burden for some years to come and add greatly to the costs of the medical insurance system in force for the peasants. It is estimated that about five percent of those infested have advanced cases of a disabling nature. Although some good drugs were developed as a result of the considerable research done in China prior to the Cultural Revolution, no entirely satisfactory drugs were created. The Western drug used with considerable success in Egypt is without effect on the species of schistosomiasis that occurs in China.

China so far has managed to withstand the drain on its manpower caused by such natural disorders. For China, a nation that relies so heavily both on the rice paddy and on human labor in its production, however, a really serious epidemic of schistosomiasis could be a major economic headache. The disease can so adversely affect the capacity of individuals to work that production in some heavily infested areas could be nearly halted.

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## COMMUNIST CAMPAIGN IN NORTHERN LAOS STALLS

General Vang Pao's forces, stiffened by large numbers of reinforcements, have succeeded in recent days in pushing North Vietnamese troops off two important hill positions within striking distance of Long Tieng. The Communist drive has been further blunted by the fact that government troops have moved back into the nearby refugee center at Sam Thong. The security situation has improved enough to encourage the civilian population to start returning to their homes.

Although these gains have helped to boost troop morale, Vang Pao's forces are still far from securing the approaches to Long Tieng. Government forces, for example, have been strongly rebuffed in their attempts to reoccupy the Tha Tam Bleung outpost.

Facing some 4,000 government defenders and under heavy and almost continuous air attack, the North Vietnamese are bringing in

reinforcements to bolster their 3,000-man force in the Long Tieng area. Reconnaissance elements have begun operating near the lightly defended southern approaches to Long Tieng. This activity suggests the Communists may try to encircle the base in order to shell the airstrip, a vital supply link for Vang Pao's forces.

Communist forces also are moving against government outposts to the north and west of the Plaine des Jarres. The most significant effort is against Bouam Long, the most important government base north of the Plaine. The rugged terrain and heavy air strikes so far have hindered the enemy from closing in on the base in strength. Bouam Long was the target of a major but unsuccessful enemy operation last May. The further commitment of significant enemy resources at this time points up Communist sensitivity to Vang Pao's guerrilla operations against their supply lines in this area.

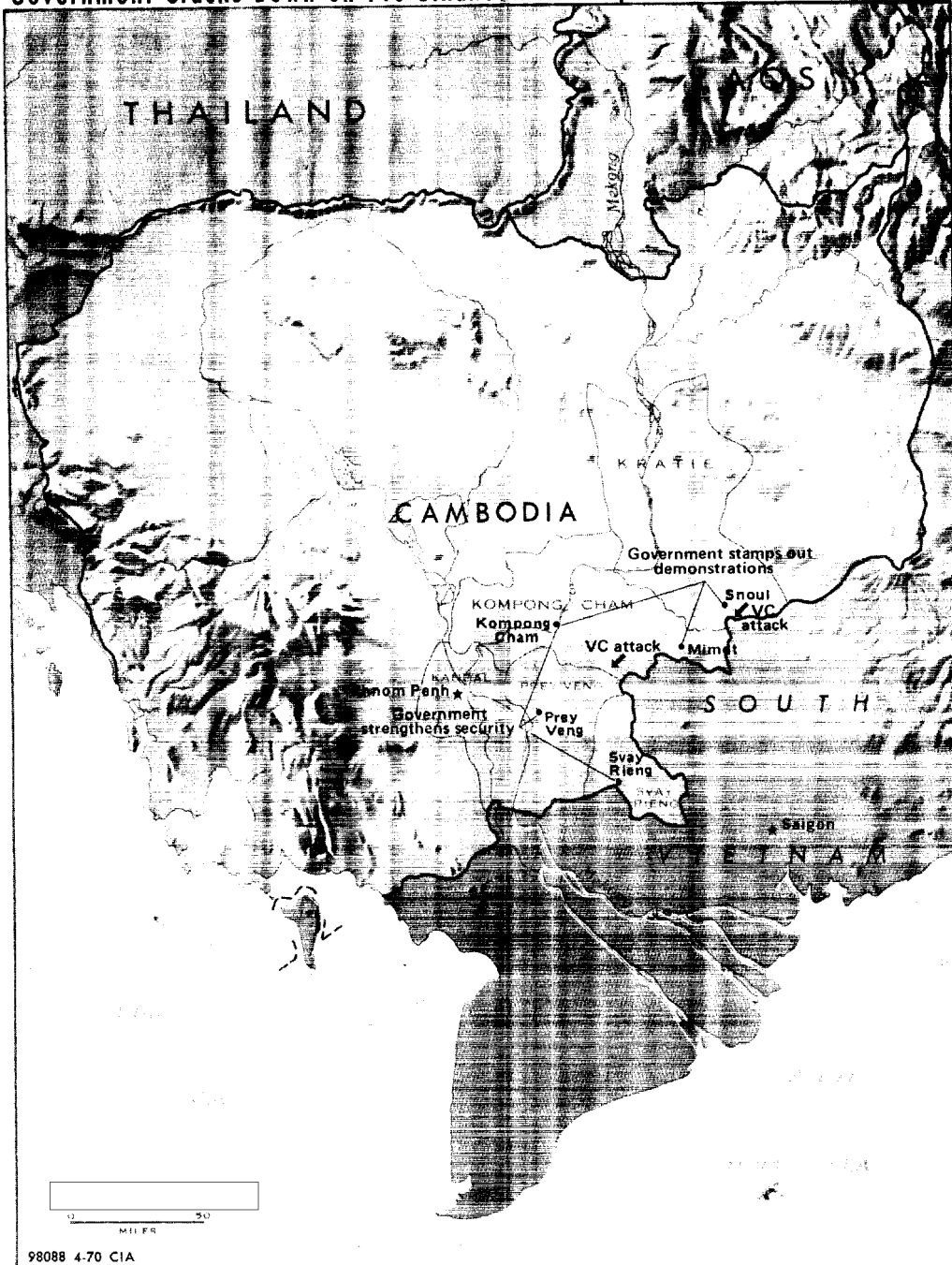
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### Government Cracks Down on Pro-Sihanouk Activity



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## GOVERNMENT FORCEFULLY CURBING PRO-SIHANOUK ACTIVITY

Phnom Penh has successfully met the first challenges to its authority by stamping out several violent pro-Sihanouk demonstrations in the countryside. The largest disturbances occurred in Kompong Cham Province, where thousands of demonstrators sacked provincial offices and killed several prominent local officials. Government retaliation was swift and brutal. Almost 30 demonstrators were killed in one incident alone, when army troops fired into a crowd.

Although there probably is some genuine local support for Sihanouk in this area, there is a strong possibility the Vietnamese Communists may have played an active role in fomenting the unrest. Kompong Cham has long been an area of heavy Vietnamese Communist influence and infiltration, and the disorders broke out shortly after Hanoi endorsed Sihanouk's appeal to the Cambodian people to "liberate" the country.

Smaller antigovernment demonstrations also were held in other eastern and southern provinces, but at week's end, the government seems to have restored order and is taking additional security measures to strengthen its control over provincial towns. The potential for more trouble remains, however, particularly in Kompong Cham where government control in outlying districts reportedly has deteriorated.

Phnom Penh, meanwhile, remains at least outwardly calm, and Prime Minister Lon Nol and other leaders appear confident they can cope with the situation. The government has

kept up a steady barrage of information and propaganda to rally population support and to counter rumors and Sihanouk's statements from Peking. Responding to Phnom Penh's appeals, large crowds of enthusiastic youths turned out in the capital to enlist in the armed forces.

The government also has devoted considerable attention to its relations with the Vietnamese Communists. It has repeated its willingness to negotiate the troop withdrawal question and, in an effort to drum up international assistance, has asked the Secretary General of the United Nations to use his influence. In view of Hanoi's continuing hard antigovernment propaganda line, however, there is little hope for any immediate renewal of official contacts between the Communists and the Cambodians. Prime Minister Lon Nol probably further dampened any hopes of negotiations when he declared that he eventually might ask friendly countries, including the US, for military materiel.

Perhaps in an effort to dramatize its present plight, the government has charged that sizable contingents of Viet Cong troops have made some deep incursions into southeastern and eastern border areas. There is no reliable evidence to support these claims, however. Nervous Cambodian Army units have reported some attacks on border positions, which probably represent a determination by the Communists to strengthen their sanctuaries. Other border areas are quiet, with little or no Communist offensive activity reported.

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**EUROPE**

[redacted] Soviet President Podgorny concluded a successful visit to Iran this week, during which he and the Shah discussed the expansion of political and economic ties, as well as Soviet intentions in the Persian Gulf.

For the first time since the opening of the Paris talks in 1968, the French Government this week publicly reiterated its view that the Vietnamese war is only one part of a broader crisis that will have to be resolved on a regional basis. The statement called for negotiations among all parties involved to achieve a "zone of neutrality and peace" in Indochina, thus reasserting a key element of De Gaulle's policy toward the area. Foreign Minister Schumann later stressed that France sought "negotiations" rather than a "conference."

Moscow's response to France's proposal will almost certainly be in line with Hanoi's. The Soviets have avoided becoming deeply involved in the recent crises in Cambodia and Laos, and they probably would prefer to see the Indochina problem switched to the diplomatic arena.

Soviet party chief Brezhnev came to Budapest this week for celebrations of the 25th anniversary of Hungary's liberation. No other Warsaw Pact party sent its first secretary.

A meeting of Warsaw Pact foreign ministers or their deputies seems to be scheduled for mid-April in Budapest. The discussion reportedly will once again center on means on maintaining momentum for a conference on European security.

Italy's prolonged government crisis was resolved on 27 March when a new center-left coalition headed by Premier Rumor was formed. Rumor will present his program to Parliament on 7 April, and no problems are foreseen in getting a vote of confidence. The duration of the government, however, will depend to a great extent on party politics as the parties prepare for the local and regional elections to be held in late May or early June.

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## WEST FACES FURTHER PRESSURES AT UN ON AFRICA

Many Africans were surprised and angered by the recent joint US-UK veto in the UN Security Council of an African-sponsored resolution on Rhodesia. The African representatives can be expected to repeat their tactics of offering initiatives distasteful to the Western powers and may focus their attention soon on other southern African issues, particularly South-West Africa.

The African draft called for the UK to use force to bring down the Smith regime and for all UN members to honor a complete ban on communications with Rhodesia. The Afro-Asian five-seat bloc on the Council is always assured of two Soviet-controlled votes for resolutions of this nature. Taiwan voted for the resolution out of concern for retaining a favorable position vis-a-vis the Chinese representation question. The critical ninth vote--nine favorable votes permit a resolution to pass unless a permanent Council member casts a veto--was that of Spain, which concurred after securing the deletion of a paragraph that would have extended the current economic sanctions against Rhodesia to Portuguese Mozambique and South Africa. Madrid might also be willing to vote for future militant resolutions on southern African issues if Portuguese-controlled areas are not cited.

The chief Zambian delegate at the UN has told the US mission

there that the Africans are considering requesting Security Council meetings on other southern African issues, including apartheid and South-West Africa, during the second quarter of 1970. The Africans will probably offer initiatives designed to win the support of at least nine Council members, but phrased in such a way as to be difficult for the Western powers to accept.

The Africans also can be expected to push in the Security Council's seven-member Rhodesian sanctions committee for more decisive action against the Smith regime. Among other things, they are likely to seek open meetings of the committee, alleging that the present closed sessions tend to shield offending nations, especially South Africa and Portugal, and companies from public attention.

Meanwhile, another special committee of the Council is to report by the end of this month on recommendations for measures to deal with Pretoria's refusal to withdraw from South-West Africa. There are indications the Africans will push for radical proposals, including an embargo on sales of oil to South Africa, a proposal they know will be unacceptable to some Western powers, especially the UK. [REDACTED]

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## ROMANIAN REGIME TAKES ON AGRICULTURAL CHALLENGE

Party and government chief Ceausescu has unveiled a grandiose scheme to raise agricultural output in the 1970s above the plateau reached in 1966. Agriculture, the stepchild of the Romanian economy, is to receive during 1971-75 more than twice the level of investments allocated during the preceding five-year period.

The agricultural sector, the target of severe criticism by the Ceausescu regime, has not made any significant advance during the last three years. At the same time, industry, aided by the preponderant share of investments, by the absorption of surplus agricultural labor, and by the importation of advanced Western technology, has grown rapidly. Industry's share of Gross National Product increased from one fourth in 1960 to one third by 1968, while agriculture's portion declined from one third to one fifth during that same period.

Ceausescu's new agricultural programs stress modern land improvement techniques and rapid expansion of livestock production. Fifty percent of arable land is to be irrigated during the next decade. The expanded application of mechanization, irrigation, and the use of chemical fertilizers are to form the keystone of a "modernized" agricultural sector. Ceausescu reaffirmed his intention to move technocrats out of Bucharest into the countryside

in order to effect a more rational use of increased inputs.

Ceausescu has blamed officials at almost every level of the bureaucracy for the backward state of the agricultural sector and in recent months has dismissed several high-level agricultural officials. Periodic reorganizations have tightened administrative control over production, but the regime has failed to achieve increased goals. Ceausescu himself may have been criticized because of the government's failure to satisfy domestic requirements for food, particularly meat and vegetables. Romania has continued to export agricultural and livestock products in order to meet its trade and hard currency earning goals, but has neglected to expand sufficiently domestic supplies during a period of rising personal incomes. This has caused widespread discontent among the populace.

The regime's plans are extremely ambitious and some goals, such as doubling livestock production in a five-year period, appear unrealistic. Moreover, the costs will be very high. In addition to direct investments in agriculture and in industry for the production of more agricultural machinery and equipment, Romania may suffer an added hard currency pinch. Exports of grain will have to be reduced in order to support the livestock program, and imports of Western farm equipment and technology will have to be expanded.

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## DUTCH GOVERNMENT BUOYED BY PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

Provincial elections on 18 March gave Dutch Prime Minister De Jong new confidence that his shaky, four-party coalition will be able to serve out its mandate that runs until next spring.

The election reflected less of a shift in voter sentiment than had been expected. Two of the coalition partners, including De Jong's own Catholic People's Party, suffered some losses at the polls, but a third partner held its own and the fourth scored some gains. The advances of the smaller opposition parties, on the other hand, fell short of expectations, and Labor, the largest opposition party, registered only fractional gains because of an increasingly bitter internal rift.

Faced with an unpopular and difficult legislative program in the coming year, De Jong was pri-

vately contemplating calling early parliamentary elections if the coalition parties did poorly in the March balloting. His reasoning was that if they were unable to stem their steep decline in popularity, they would be better able to face a parliamentary election this year than next.

Despite De Jong's new-found confidence, the government's legislative program could lead to new cabinet squabbles that would threaten the coalition's stability. De Jong, for example, narrowly avoided a crisis last November over tax policy, and preserved the government in January only by sacrificing his economics minister and his wage guidelines. Local elections in June could also make him reconsider, although the predominance of local issues and personalities makes such tests less meaningful than provincial elections.

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## LITTLE PROGRESS ON SEABEDS ISSUES

The prolonged meeting last month of the UN General Assembly's seabeds committee failed to resolve critical questions about peaceful uses of the ocean floor. Disappointing in itself, the stalemate is also making it more difficult for the US and the USSR to obtain an endorsement at the Geneva disarmament talks of the draft treaty limiting military utilization of the seabeds.

The seabeds committee was unable to agree on principles to govern exploration and exploitation of the ocean floor beyond national jurisdiction. Although worried by the capability of the technically advanced nations to exploit seabeds resources, the less developed countries are nevertheless split on how to protect their own interests in seabeds development. Several favor extending their territorial waters

claims, but others are pushing for an international body that would control the peaceful uses of the seabeds. Some agreement on basic principles may be reached, however, when the committee meets again in August.

Pique at Soviet opposition to an international regime to control the ocean floor has led Sweden to urge the other non-aligned delegates at the Geneva talks to delay approval of the draft seabeds treaty. Stockholm wants them to join in demanding reference in the text to "appropriate international procedures" as one method of verifying compliance with the treaty's prohibitions. Moscow appears to regard such terminology as creating a wedge for the establishment of an international regime.

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### MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA

In reaction to bolder harassing attacks in the Golan Heights area, Israeli forces on 2 April pounded Syrian positions with aerial and artillery fire. Earlier, Israeli aircraft struck at Jordan for the first time in several weeks in reaction to a fedayeen shelling of the potash works at Sedom; Saudi troops were among the resulting casualties. Israeli air strikes against Egyptian installations along the Suez Canal and in the Nile Delta continued intermittently throughout the week. Fatah leader Yasir Arafat is now in Hanoi—presumably seeking weapons, propaganda support, and a more official status for the fedayeen—but the North Vietnamese are unlikely to furnish any significant material support.

Major military action erupted in the Sudan, where the revolutionary government sought a showdown with the powerful Ansar sect. The Lebanese Government, on the other hand, succeeded in cooling the animosities that had led to bloody communal fighting there last weekend.

Air force units in southern Turkey still remain on partial alert, but the recent earthquake disaster has diverted much of the popular attention and emotion from the Cyprus problem. Student agitation and violence has also waned, following a sharp warning from the government to “stop it now, or else.” Popular sentiment appears to support strong restrictive measures against the student activists, if necessary.

In India, Mrs. Gandhi's Congress Party suffered somewhat greater losses than expected in elections for the upper house of parliament, but this will probably have no significant effect on central government stability. In Rajasthan State, a new but potentially unstable coalition has been formed to replace the government that fell on 25 March. West Bengal remains under direct rule from New Delhi, and governments in at least half of India's other states are in danger of falling.

Congo (Brazzaville) President Ngouabi's extreme leftist partners are moving to consolidate their position following the unsuccessful coup attempt last month by exiled dissidents based in Congo (Kinshasa). They have decided to establish a people's militia, and have brought another long-time leftist into the regime's inner circle. Kinshasa's Mobutu, however, is apparently not deterred by the dismal failure of the latest attempt to topple Ngouabi's regime.

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Army leaders in Dahomey have not yet decided what to do next following their suspension last weekend of the nearly completed national elections. Extensive palavers are going on in Cotonou, while regional animosities continue to grow. Some northern politicians are now threatening secession if the army's decision does not go their way.

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## MIDDLE EAST

### Arab-Israeli Military Action

The Israelis last week mounted almost daily air attacks along the west bank of the Suez Canal and also raided other targets about 15 miles back from the canal and along the northern coast of the Gulf of Suez.

Israeli forces in the occupied Golan Heights area of Syria used both artillery and aircraft in a punishing attack on Syrian positions on 1 and 2 April; Israeli ground troops apparently did not cross the cease-fire line. Israel claimed to have knocked down three Syrian MIG-21s, and may have lost an F-4 Phantom. The Syrians had stepped up their harassing actions over the past two weeks or so

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During the week, the Israelis carried out two deep-penetration air raids into Egypt. On 23 March they hit a radar station near Baltim on the Mediterranean coast and on 31 March they struck several SA-2 missile sites near al Mansura, 70 miles northeast of Cairo.

Incidents continued elsewhere along the Israeli-held borders, but at a low level. There were occasional clashes between the Israelis and fedayeen based in southern Lebanon, and there were cross-border shellings and other minor actions on the Israel-Jordan border. For the first time in over a month, Israel used aircraft to attack Jordanian targets in response to a fedayeen attack south of the Dead Sea.

### Communal Clash in Lebanon

Widespread communal strife between Muslims and Christians was narrowly averted last week. Clashes broke out between Palestinian commandos, who have many sympathizers among the Muslims, and the militant Christian

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Phalanges Party, which regards the commandos' free-wheeling activities as an infringement of Lebanese sovereignty. A cease-fire was arranged after three days of fighting in which at least 30 people were killed. The commandos and the government subsequently reaffirmed their adherence to the Cairo agreement, which was worked out with Egyptian mediation after a more serious confrontation last fall.

One of the most radical of the commando groups, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), was not included in the latest cease-fire negotiations, however, and it has embarked on a campaign against US interests in Lebanon. As justification, the PFLP has cited allegations in the Lebanese left-wing press that the US was plotting against the commandos with "reactionary" elements in Lebanon.

#### Iraq Forms New Cabinet

Last weekend's cabinet reshuffle also brought in five Kurdish ministers and added three more members of the country's ruling Revolutionary Command Council. The new government line-up follows the agreement reached on 11 March between the Kurds and the Baghdad regime aimed at settling the country's protracted civil war. The new Kurdish cabinet members, however, are only from the second level of the Kurdish movement, and none received a key cabinet post. The inclusion of additional

members of the council probably signals the regime's intention to keep government affairs securely in Arab hands.

The settlement as announced by Baghdad was--probably intentionally--obscure at a number of key points.

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Iraq's provincial governors are said to have been ordered to treat members of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) on an equal basis with members of the Baath Party, and a Kurdish delegation is collecting the names of Kurds imprisoned for political reasons in an attempt to arrange their release.

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Discussions are said to be taking place between the Baath Party, the KDP, and the main faction of the Communist Party, with a view toward forming a united front. The Baath has previously made a number of such overtures to the Communist Party without success, however.

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## PAKISTAN MOVES CLOSER TO RESTORATION OF CIVILIAN RULE

On 28 March, four months to the day after his last address to the nation and roughly one year after he assumed power from the tottering Ayub regime, President Yahya Khan announced further plans for returning Pakistan to civilian rule. He reaffirmed his determination to hold elections for a constituent assembly on 5 October and also announced that provincial elections would be held not later than 22 October. Two days later, the government released a "legal framework order," spelling out the fundamental principles to be incorporated in the new constitution and providing a breakdown of the number of seats in the constituent and provincial assemblies.

Initial reaction to Yahya's latest initiative has been generally favorable in West Pakistan but somewhat more guarded in the East wing. The Bengalis presumably welcomed his demand that the constitution provide for an end to economic disparities between provinces within a fixed time period, although they may be somewhat cynical about the government's ability to follow through. Yahya again noted, as he did last November, that each province must be given maximum autonomy, but he was vague on specifics. His equal emphasis on the continuing powers of the federal government, however, may not go over well in autonomy-minded East Pakistan.

On 1 April, detailed plans for the dissolution of West Pakistan into four provinces, closely resembling those in existence before 1956, were revealed. The President in his speech had announced that the new

provinces would start functioning as of 1 July.

Yahya's unexpected announcement regarding provincial elections will be welcomed by most political leaders in both wings of the nation. As a practical matter, getting these elections out of the way prior to the writing of the constitution should make the politicians more amenable to compromise. Yahya expressed confidence that the constituent assembly would be able to complete its work within the previously announced 120-day limit.

The President declined to outline voting procedures for the assembly, insisting instead that it establish its own. He noted, however, that the voting system adopted should be reasonably satisfactory to all regions, an indication that he prefers some form of vote requiring more than a simple majority in order to protect the other provinces from domination by the East Pakistanis, who will have 169 of the 313 seats in the assembly. Yahya also made passing reference to his own veto power over the final product of the assembly reminding his audience that before any constitution becomes operative, he must authenticate it.

Finally, Yahya came down hard on the necessity for maintaining law and order during the anticipated emotion-packed electoral campaigns to come, and warned against any attempt to destroy the integrity of the nation. His words were given added effect by several recent arrests in East Pakistan of left-wing extremists who have been preaching armed revolution and independence for East Bengal.

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## WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Kidnaping continued to dominate the news from Latin America this week.

[REDACTED] In Guatemala, the West German ambassador was kidnaped by the Rebel Armed Forces on 31 March. According to press reports, the terrorists are demanding the release of 16 of their colleagues in exchange for the ambassador. The kidnaping is likely to cause additional problems for the outgoing administration during its remaining three months in office. Panamanian officials have heard that terrorists plan to kidnap prominent National Guard officers and even a member of the family of the US ambassador.

This spate of kidnapings has prompted some governments to take a hard look at the whole problem. Argentina will seek an agreement with member nations of the Organization of American States not to grant political asylum to imprisoned extremists released for kidnaped diplomats. Uruguayan President Pacheco reportedly said recently that in the event a Uruguayan official or a representative of a foreign government was kidnaped by a terrorist organization in his country, he would not accede to its demands. Like other government leaders in Latin America, Pacheco believes it is time to stop acquiescing in terrorist demands.

In other developments, Raul Castro, Cuba's armed forces minister, has accepted Soviet Defense Minister Grechko's invitation to pay "an official, friendly visit" to Moscow early this month. The Cuban press says that Castro will be returning Grechko's visit to Cuba last November; it is likely that military assistance to Cuba will be a major subject of any discussions. Meanwhile, the sugar harvest continues to slip further behind schedule as the most intensive phase begins. As of 3 April, production lagged roughly 600 thousand tons behind the six-million-ton total targeted for that date.

[REDACTED] The Salvadorans are publicly blaming Honduras for the action and are hoping to get the other Central American countries to press Honduras to open its section of the highway to Salvadoran traffic. This ploy is not likely to succeed. Honduras will not end its blockade without major concessions, and the other states may take economic reprisals against El Salvador if there is a long delay in repairing the damage. [REDACTED]

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CRACKS APPEAR IN VENEZUELA'S LEFT

The Venezuelan Communist Party (PCV) may be facing another split. In June 1966 Douglas Bravo bolted the party with his hard-line faction to carry out guerrilla warfare in defiance of the party line of nonviolence, narrowing the party's base. The group that will probably break off this time is led by Teodoro Petkoff, a member of the central committee. This group believes that the present leadership is ineffective and thoroughly compromised by its close ties to the Soviet Union. The Petkoff group wants to establish a nationalistic and leftist but non-Communist party with no ties to the Soviet Union, China, or Cuba.

Petkoff's followers believe that before the break can take place they must develop significant support within the PCV and the Communist Youth organization. It is considered especially important that a large percentage of the Communist Youth join, because it is numerically larger and more dynamic than the PCV. The Petkoff group must also solve its financial problems and work out the details of its ideological position.

Four factions emerged at the party's fifteenth plenum in early March. Between the Old Guard and Petkoff's group stood a group of moderates under Pompeyo Marquez, who argued that the central committee should register its disapproval of Petkoff's anti-Soviet views but that it should not punish him for ex-

pressing them. A fourth group formed around Secretary General Jesus Faria, who said that he could not support either the Old Guard leaders or Petkoff but that both groups should work for party unity.

Unity will not be easily achieved, however, even if the Petkoff group does not break formally with the party. In addition to numerous doctrinal differences, there are deep personal resentments. Many PCV members in the course of their work for the party have suffered imprisonment, torture, and interruption of work or studies, and members of their families have suffered privations and death. Some of these party members blame the ineptitude of their leaders for their suffering.

The splintering in the PCV is a reflection of the weakness and divisions that plague the leftist revolutionaries. In addition to the PCV, the main revolutionary groups are Bravo's Armed Forces of National Liberation, made up of about 60 guerrillas and a small urban support organization; the Movement of the Revolutionary Left, a dormant, illegal party with about 40 guerrillas divided into three competing factions; and the new left Academic Renovation Movement, which is too amorphous in its makeup and goals to attract serious revolutionaries. Of the revolutionary groups only the PCV has legal recognition-- accorded a year ago by President

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Caldera. The guerrillas are subjected on one hand to constant military counterinsurgency campaigns and on the other to the blandishments of the government's pacification program, which promises rehabilitation to guerrillas who lay down their arms.

The PCV must also compete with legal parties, including the government party, whose con-

cern for social welfare usurps the PCV's principal claim to public support. Petkoff's party, if it is ever founded, would offer an alternative free of the taint of the PCV to leftists who believe that the government is not reformist enough but who are repelled by the terrorism, guerrilla warfare, and ineffectiveness of the illegal parties.

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## CHILEAN GOVERNMENT ARRESTS PLOTTERS

On 25 March the Chilean Government arrested a group of retired and active military men on charges of plotting to overthrow the administration of President Eduardo Frei. More than a dozen officers and noncommissioned officers were held. The leader of the plot was retired General Horacio Gamboa. General Roberto Viaux, who led the unsuccessful army mutiny in October 1969, has denied any connection with the plotters, but he may have been involved indirectly.

The plotters apparently were fairly well advanced in their planning. It is unlikely, however, that they would have received much support had they decided to move, as neither the navy nor the air force was connected to the conspiracy.

The move by the government, which had known about the group since mid-February, apparently

was prompted by army commander in chief Schneider. The interior minister had wanted to wait and arrest more conspirators. The government may have acted partly in the hope of influencing the Senate, which is to decide soon on impeachment charges against Defense Minister Ossa. He was suspended last week from his duties by the Chamber of Deputies for paying pensions in installments rather than in a lump sum, as demanded by Congress. Foreign Minister Valdes has assumed Ossa's portfolio pending Senate action.

There is no evidence that Gamboa was involved with any political party, although he holds extreme right-wing political views. Leftists have accused him of having ties with Jorge Alessandri, the independent conservative candidate for the presidential election in September.

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## DOMINICAN OPPOSITION THREATENS ELECTORAL ABSTENTION

In the first of what is likely to be a series of electoral crises, the major opposition parties are threatening to abstain from the elections in May because President Balaguer has not met their demand to resign. The President's outright rejection on 31 March of the opposition ultimatum has increased chances for civilian-military clashes.

When he declared for re-election last week, Balaguer said he would hand over his office to the Supreme Court president while he campaigns from 16 April until the elections on 16 May. The opposition ultimatum, signed by seven parties, stipulates that Balaguer must resign in April for the remainder of his term which does not expire until 16 August.

Under existing law, Balaguer's plan is probably unconstitutional, as the legal successor to the presidency is Vice President Lora. Lora, a signatory of the declaration and a presidential candidate himself, has stated he will resign only if Balaguer agrees to the opposition's terms. At midweek, however, Balaguer was reportedly preparing legislation that would require elected officials nominated for high public office to relinquish their positions 30 days before the elections. Such a law would provide the legal frame-

work for Balaguer's proposal, enabling him to resume office in May. It would also force Lora to step down for the same 30-day period. The President controls enough votes in the Congress to ensure passage of this legislation.

The strategy of the opposition parties is based on their distrust of the government and their ostensible wish to ensure free elections. The parties are also well aware that the threat of abstention is their most potent weapon for forcing concessions from Balaguer. The major opposition Dominican Revolutionary Party, led by Juan Bosch, has already formally decided to abstain.

In the presidential communiqué of 31 March, Balaguer nonetheless vowed to go to the elections with or without opposition participation. In the face of his hard-nosed response, it is doubtful that the opposition's hastily formed and tenuous coalition will hold together. Sooner or later, some parties will probably break the front and participate in the elections. Balaguer's stand, however, will further strengthen the belief of some factions that violence is the only effective weapon against the administration.

Continuing student and labor agitation has combined to keep the

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police and army on edge. On Tuesday, several dockworkers were killed during a demonstration in a northern port city. Communists and some other leftist elements now will use the presidential announcement to attempt to incite new disorders. The majority of the political parties are probably not yet ready to abandon elections, however, despite being backed into a corner.

There has been no government reaction to the kidnaping last week of the US air attaché and the subsequent release of 20 political prisoners in exchange. Security forces, however, spurred by that event and forced to confront the unrest that is the inevitable accompaniment of a Dominican political campaign, will probably take increasingly aggressive action against the left.

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